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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3114
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
RUCOGCA/NAVSTA GUANTANAMO BAY CU IMMEDIATE
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3115

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HAVANA 000305

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DEPT FOR WHA/CCA

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TAGS: [CU](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: CUBAN OPPOSITION SEEKS UNITY

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Classified By: COM: Michael E. Parmly : For reasons 1.4 b/d

¶1. (C) Summary: On April 10 twelve leading pro-democracy activists met for six hours to formulate a common agenda. As described by spokesperson Martha Beatriz Roque (MBR), the object was to advance a transition to democracy within an "atmosphere of national reconciliation". At a press conference after the meeting MBR read a statement that in which the participants agreed that their organizations would coordinate efforts to demand the unconditional release of all political prisoners, the cessation of the repression against the opposition, the end of the GOC embargo on the fundamental rights of the Cuban people, the compliance with all international pacts, including the UN Declaration of Human Rights, that GOC has signed and the replacement of the totalitarian state with a democratic government. Meeting participants included almost all of the leading dissidents with the notable exception of Oswaldo Paya. While Paya was absent from the meeting, MBR stressed that these were steps in the process of uniting the opposition, and she left the door open for his involvement at a later date. End summary.

¶2. (C)) On April 10 twelve leading opposition leaders met for six hours in the Havana home of dissident, Carlos Cordero Paez. The purpose of the meeting was to arrive at a common agenda for promoting the transition to democracy. In attendance were Martha Beatriz Roque (MBR), Felix Antonio Bonne Carcasses, Margarito Broche Espinosa, Francisco Chaviano, Guillermo Farinas, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez (Antunez), Rene Gomez Manzano, Maria Antonia Hidalgo Mir from Holguin, Roberto de Miranda, Vladimiro Roca, Idania Yanes Contreras and Elizardo Sanchez. Originally 18 people were invited, but for instance, Hector Palacios is overseas and Jose Diaz Silva was arrested on April 2 and is still being detained. Speaking to Poloff afterwards, all the participants described the meeting as frank and productive.

¶3. (U) After the meeting MBR served as the spokesperson at a press conference with the international media. She read a statement stating that the participants had agreed to work in a coordinated manner for the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners, the end of repression of the political opposition, the end of the GOC's embargo on the

fundamental rights of the Cuban people, the compliance of all international pacts that the GOC has signed, including the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and a transition to a democratic government. The group acknowledged that they could not resolve differences on the subject of the US economic embargo.

14. (U) MBR said that this effort showed the "maturity" of the Cuban opposition, acknowledging that in the past there were "antagonisms". She also said that in some respects the Cuban opposition was not fully prepared for a transition, but added they were better prepared than dissident groups in some other countries, and much better prepared for change than the government of Raul Castro. She publicly thanked the US based organizations "MAR por Cuba", "Plantados hasta la libertad y la democracia en Cuba" and "Juristas por la Democracia" for their support. When questioned about the absence of Paya, MBR stated that he had declined to attend the meeting, but stressed that these were the initial stages of the unity project, and that Paya did not rule out the idea of future involvement.

15. (C) After this meeting, Poloff talked to Oswaldo Paya. Paya stated that this group is using the wrong approach. He feels that they are pushing an agenda on the population in a premature fashion. Paya believes that ordinary Cubans need to be empowered with a sense of their basic rights and then engaged in a process of developing their own agenda for the country's future. He has signed up 500 volunteers in every province for his Cuban Forum project that seeks to involve ordinary Cubans in this debate.

16. (C) Comment: Many of the participants at this event stated that they are dismayed that some foreign governments and some media outlets are saying that Raul Castro has accomplished a complete and successful transition of power and is embarking on a course of meaningful reform. They indicated that the dissident community needs to make a united

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and concerted effort to demonstrate that this is a complete deception.
PARMLY